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OGC REVIEW  
COMPLETED

19 May 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : Project and Program Planning

Following are a few informal comments anent the Project Review Committee and the planning function:

1. I have long felt that the Project Review Committee was a rather unsuccessful compromise to close a gap arising out of the lack of any over-all Agency planning mechanism. The name itself reveals its weakness. In the 10 years I have been doing the same job, we have repeatedly tried to reach an agreed definition of a Project and have as often failed. This causes endless confusion as to what shall and shall not be brought before the Committee, and I see no satisfactory solution on this definition problem. The Review part of the name is all too accurate, as to a considerable extent the Committee has been reviewing undertakings to which we are already committed in many instances. Finally, I believe a Committee is an improper concept to perform the function which is needed here. The Deputy from whose area the matter going to the Director comes should be an advocate for the proposition and not a member of a group voting as to whether it should be recommended. The other Deputies may or may not be competent actually to pass on the matter or any portion of it. What is needed is their competence insofar as it applies.

2. The above indicates to me that what the Director should have is a mechanism for continual scanning of the Agency and its operations from the point of view of foreseeable developments in the future, with liaison on a continuing basis with the planning and operational officers of the various divisions of the Agency so that operations can be evolved in a manner consistent with those foreseeable developments and budgeted in accordance with standard Agency policy. Insofar as they are budgeted, they are, of course, approved for implementation upon over-all approval of the budget and passage of appropriations. Those which cannot be budgeted will remain under the continuing

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scrutiny of the planning function, which can, in coordination with other facilities of the Agency, determine which ones can be implemented under existing authorities and delegations and which ones will have to be referred to the Director for approval. Upon referral to the Director this planning function should call, at whatever level seems suitable including the three Agency Deputies, for such advice and comment as may be appropriate. I feel the Director would be far better informed by such a continuing process than by the intermittent examination provided by the current system.

/s/

LAWRENCE R. HOUSTON  
General Counsel

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cc: OGC-1707 J  
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